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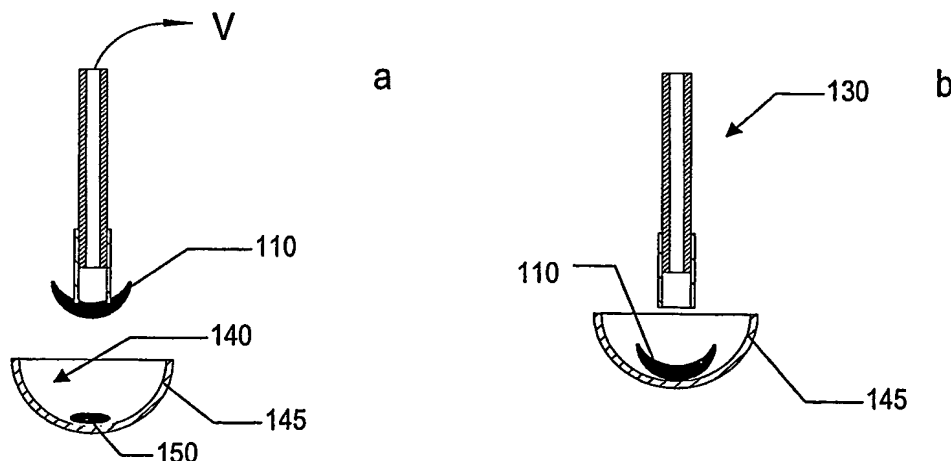
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(54) Title: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR USE IN CONTACT LENS MANUFACTURE AND PACKAGING



(57) Abstract: An un-hydrated contact lens (110) is removed from a concave mould piece (115) while holding the mould lens-uppermost, by applying a downward force to a flange portion of the mould, applying an upward force (F) to the convex backside of the mould piece. The resulting deformation breaks adhesion between the lens and the concave optical surface of the mould piece, while the lens is captured and removed by a lifting probe (130, 134). Many lenses are processed in parallel. The dry, un-hydrated contact lenses (110) are deposited by the probe (130, 134) into respective packaging blister cavities (145). Each cavity is pre-dosed with a spot of fluid (150). The contact of fluid between lens and receptacle captures the lens consistently in the base of the receptacle, neutralising the disruptive effects of electrostatic charges in particular. With the dry lens (110) in the packaging cavity (145) a finishing head is used comprising adjacent inlet and outlet nozzles (230, 240) for hydrating the lens, for flushing away contaminated hydrating fluid (220), prior to dosing the cavity with packaging fluid (260).



— *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

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